



Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

1. Policy Statement

Merryland International School is committed to providing age-appropriate, culturally respectful, and scientifically accurate Relationship and Sex Education. The programme aligns fully with ADEK requirements, UAE national values, and Islamic principles. Its purpose is to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to form healthy relationships, understand personal safety, and make responsible decisions as they grow.

2. Guiding Principles (ADEK-Aligned)

RSE at MIS is grounded in respect for UAE cultural and Islamic values, ensuring all content is delivered sensitively and appropriately. Learning is age-sequenced, progressing gradually from Early Years to Secondary. The programme reinforces safeguarding and child protection, teaching students how to stay safe and recognise unsafe situations. MIS values strong parental partnership, keeping families informed and involved. All biological content is taught with scientific accuracy within the Science curriculum. The programme also promotes inclusivity and wellbeing, supporting empathy, emotional literacy, and respectful behaviour.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all students from EYFS to Grade 12, as well as all teaching and support staff. It covers every curriculum area where RSE themes appear, including Science, Moral Education, Wellbeing, national identity and Pastoral programmes. It also applies to school-organised workshops, assemblies, and wellbeing initiatives.

4. Curriculum Structure & Content

4.1 Early Years

Students learn about body awareness, hygiene, privacy, safe and unsafe touch, and friendships. They develop emotional regulation, understand family structures, and practise respect and empathy. No sexual content is taught at this stage. Age appropriate personal safety education is also introduced at this stage.



4.2 Primary (Grade 1-Grade 5)

For students in Grades 1 – 5, Personal Safety Education (PSE) lessons are delivered through age-appropriate structured learning experiences that promote personal wellbeing, emotional awareness, and personal safety skills.

Students learn to identify, name, and understand a range of emotions and feelings, and explore how these emotions can help them recognize situations that feel safe, unsafe, comfortable, or uncomfortable. Lessons also address the concepts of wanted and unwanted touch in an age-appropriate manner, emphasizing personal boundaries, respect, and body autonomy.

Personal safety rules are explicitly taught through guided discussions, demonstrations, role-play activities, and practical scenarios. Students are encouraged to develop confidence, assertiveness, and decision-making skills to respond appropriately to situations that may make them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

The curriculum reinforces key personal safety messages, including the importance of:

- Recognizing and trusting their feelings.
- Setting and respecting personal boundaries.
- Using assertive communication to say “NO” when necessary.
- Understanding that inappropriate behaviour by others is never acceptable
- Moving away from unsafe situations whenever possible.
- Seeking support by reporting concerns to a trusted adult.
- Accepting the truth that “it is not their fault”

The programme aims to empower students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make safe choices, seek help when needed and contribute to a respectful and supportive school environment.

4.3 Lower Secondary (Grades 6–8)

In Lower Secondary, personal safety and wellbeing education provides students with age-appropriate, evidence-based learning about the physical, emotional, and social changes that occur during puberty and early adolescence.

Through structured lessons, students explore the signs and stages of puberty, including growth spurts, hormonal changes, and the development of secondary sexual characteristics. They are



supported in understanding how these changes may influence their emotions, behaviour, self-image, and overall wellbeing.

Students are taught the importance of personal hygiene and self-care practices during puberty, including specific guidance on physical and emotional wellbeing during menstruation. Lessons promote positive health habits and encourage students to develop confidence in managing the changes associated with adolescence.

The curriculum also addresses body image, self-esteem and identity development, helping students build a positive and respectful understanding of themselves and others. Students explore strategies for emotional regulation, resilience, and maintaining healthy relationships.

In addition lessons emphasise respectful communication, personal boundaries, consent and the development of healthy friendships. Learning experiences are delivered in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment that encourages students to seek guidance from trusted adults when needed.

The programme aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to navigate adolescence safely, responsibly and with respect for themselves and others.

Students are taught how to stay safe online, including recognising risky digital behaviour and understanding the long term impact of their digital footprint. Biological reproduction is covered strictly within the science curriculum, following Cambridge standards and presented in a factual and non-sensational manner.

4.3 Upper Secondary (Grades 9–12)

In Upper Secondary, personal safety and wellbeing education builds on students' earlier learning, enabling them to develop a more advanced understanding of personal wellbeing, healthy relationships, responsibility, and preparation for adult life. Learning about human reproduction is delivered in an age-appropriate, scientific manner that aligns with the Cambridge Biology curriculum and respects UAE cultural values. The content remains factual, educational, and respectful, focusing on biological processes and healthy development.

The programme places strong emphasis on nurturing healthy, respectful relationships across family, school, social, and digital settings. Students are supported to recognise the importance of trust, respect, responsibility, and effective communication in sustaining positive relationships and safeguarding their personal wellbeing.



5. Teaching & Learning Approach

RSE is delivered through Science lessons for biological content, Moral Education and UAE Social Studies for value-based learning, and Wellbeing and Pastoral programmes for emotional and psycho-social development. Teacher-led discussions use only approved resources and follow clear boundaries to ensure sensitivity and respect. Teaching methods emphasise confidentiality, evidence-based information, and culturally appropriate language. Workshops or sessions involving sensitive topics are conducted only with parental awareness and consent.

6. Parental Engagement

MIS recognises parents as primary educators in matters of relationships and personal development. The school provides advance notice of RSE units, shares curriculum outlines and sample materials, and offers parent information sessions when needed. The school maintains open communication to ensure parents feel informed, respected, and involved.

7. Safeguarding & Child Protection

RSE supports the school's safeguarding framework by teaching students how to recognise unsafe situations, understand personal boundaries, and report concerns to trusted adults. Any disclosures made during RSE lessons are handled in accordance with the MIS Child Protection Policy and ADEK requirements. Staff are trained to respond appropriately, maintain confidentiality, and follow reporting procedures without delay.

8. Staff Training & Responsibilities

All staff involved in delivering RSE participate in annual training - covering ADEK requirements, cultural sensitivity, safeguarding practices, and age-appropriate instructional approaches. They use only school-approved materials, uphold professional boundaries at all times, and report any concerns without delay. Oversight of curriculum quality, compliance, and resource approval is carried out by the Head of Department, the Wellbeing Lead, and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure consistent implementation and full alignment with policy expectation.

9. Resources & Materials

All RSE materials used at MIS are culturally appropriate, approved by the Senior Leadership Team, and aligned with ADEK and UAE values. We ensure that the resources used – avoids explicit or sensitive content as per UAE norms and rules.



10. Monitoring & Evaluation

RSE implementation is reviewed annually through lesson observations, curriculum audits, parent feedback, student wellbeing surveys, and ADEK compliance checks. Findings from these reviews are used in curriculum planning, staff training, and resource selection. The school ensures that RSE delivery remains effective, culturally aligned, and responsive to student needs.

11. Policy Review Cycle

Merryland International School is committed to delivering an RSE programme that is safe, culturally aligned, and developmentally appropriate for all students. The policy ensures that teaching - supports students' wellbeing, personal safety, and respectful behaviour while upholding UAE values and ADEK expectations.

This policy is reviewed annually or earlier if ADEK issues updated guidance, curriculum changes occur, or inspection recommendations require amendments. The review process ensures that the RSE programme remains current, compliant, and aligned with best practice in safeguarding, wellbeing, and cultural expectations.

Principal



Reviewed on 02 June 2026

Merryland International School is an outstanding, ISO 9001-certified, British Curriculum K-12 school located in Abu Dhabi, U.A.E. providing high quality education to pupils of more than 40 nationalities. Merryland has been a pioneer in education for the last four decades remaining true to its motto 'Changing lives...Nations wide'.

